

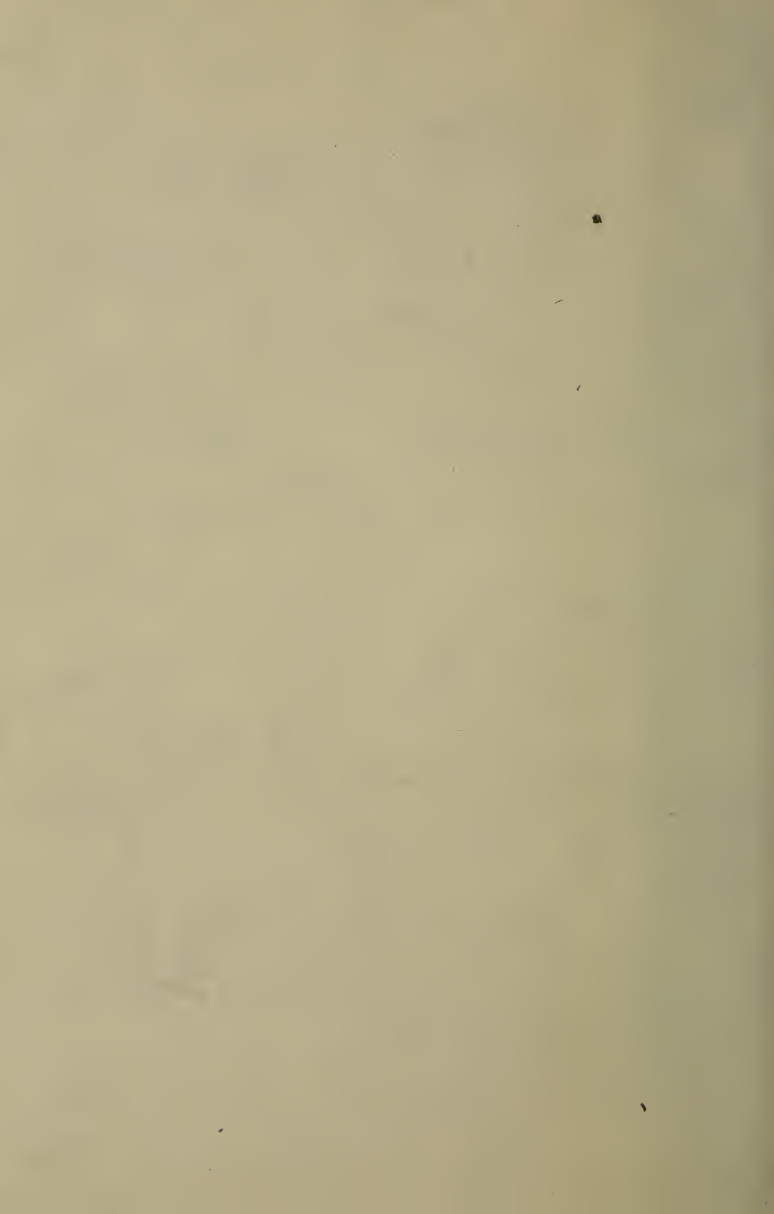
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# Out of the Deep

BY

EDITH WILLIS LINN





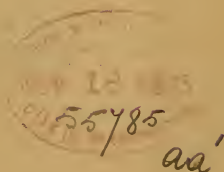
# OUT OF THE DEEP

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Pen Pictures in Prose and Verse

BY

EDITH WILLIS LINN  
"



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EDITH WILLIS LINN

Mrs. E. H. Linn

Rochester

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## EVOLUTION

WITH the aspiring pine my soul was bound.  
Mine was the joyous birth  
Through the dark soil of earth  
Into the upper air ;  
Mine was the sunlight found,  
Mine was the watchful sky  
Whither I lifted high  
Glad arms, as if in prayer.

Under the solemn skies I joyed to stand,  
When the strong winter blast  
From the north, rushing past,  
Whirled on my crown of snow.  
When spring's caressing hand  
Wakened the world again,  
Mine was a tender strain  
Sung to the flowers below.

So from the earth and air I learned to praise.  
 And when my race was run,  
 All the sweet sighing done,  
 The war with wind and rain  
 Overpast—nights and days  
 Flowed on as one to me  
 Wrapped in the mystery  
 Of life in Heaven again.

While leaf and branch and bough slept in the  
     mould,  
 The life that led them high  
 Up toward the beckoning sky ;  
 Life that was more than tree ;  
 With its new freedom bold  
 Into God's presence came,  
 Mingled again in flame  
 With the All-mystery.

To the glad race of flowers I am akin.  
 Mine was the life that knew  
 Beauty of form and hue  
 Blent with a strange perfume.  
 Mine was the strength to win  
 Battle with wind and rain,  
 Springing to earth again  
 Out of surrounding gloom.

Oh ! when I feel once more the life of spring  
 Pulse through my human veins ;  
 When the soft April rains  
 Moisten the waiting sod ;  
 When first the blue-birds sing,  
 I am as one new-born,  
 Thrilling with life unworn,  
 Opening my heart to God.

Whenever bees are glad in blooms of June,  
 I have a sense of life  
 Free once from human strife :  
 Now all too dimly known.  
 And through the fragrant noon  
 I seem to know the power  
 That is the rose's dower—  
 Soul into perfume blown.

When—leaf and blossom sear—I, too, seemed  
 dead  
 To every sight and sound ;  
 Through many a mystic round  
 Of clouds and prismic dew,  
 That spark of being sped  
 Into the light and fire ;  
 Whence, born of soul-desire,  
 All life comes forth anew.

To my imprisoned soul pinions belong.  
 I know the tiny nest  
 By dainty birdlings prest ;  
 Know all the rhapsody  
 Of love that speaks in song.  
 I know the hovering wings  
 Of one who broods and sings :  
 Mine was that ecstasy.

Mine were the birds' dumb wants ; I know them  
     all,  
 And long to soar again  
 Out of this strife and pain  
 Where the weak human clings,  
 Waiting the heavenly call ;  
 Yet, like grim prison bars,  
 Doubt shuts me from the stars,  
 Cripples the spirit's wings.

When with the bird had passed song, nesting,  
     flight ;  
 When the soft, downy breast  
 Sank to eternal rest ;  
 Out of that soul of song,  
 Into immortal light,  
 Burst the ethereal flame

That hath nor form nor name,  
Yet burns forever strong.

Thus through all forms of life runs the same  
soul.

That which is one with God,  
Rising from mire and clod  
Through countless shining rounds  
Makes one unbroken whole :  
Growth, song, and scent aspire,  
One with man's high desire,  
Spurning earth's narrow bounds.

I am the sum of all that has been gained  
Both out of death and birth,  
Through myriad forms of earth.  
This deathless soul of mine  
Counts not each course attained :  
Only by sudden gleams  
Memory immortal seems—  
Human, and yet divine.

Oft in this needy world, bespent with care,  
With restlessness and pain,  
High purpose seems in vain ;  
Compassed, the spirit's power ;

Then even praise and prayer  
Doubtfully rise to God ;  
Unceasing strife and plod  
Crush the soul hour by hour.

Oh, for a constant sight that can assure,  
Faith in a purpose vast,  
That through an ageless past  
Led the soul out of gloom !  
Oh, for a heart so pure  
As to pierce through the night,  
Finding the forms of light  
Hidden beyond the tomb !

What is the whole sublime, that from this chain  
Of endless forms shall rise ?  
Only the Father wise  
Knoweth His own vast plan.  
Self-sacrifice were vain ;  
Vain, love's unselfish thought ;  
All, art through man hath wrought,  
If death to ruin ran.

Nay ! not for this, the strife up from the clay.  
Human hope, toil, and fears,  
Prayer, love, desire, and tears,

Make one link in the chain  
Whose ends are far away,  
Hidden from human sight,  
Lost both in dark and light  
Till God shall make them plain.

## THE POET

THE soul of the poet dwelt close to God. He saw only beauty and goodness in the universe, and in his exaltation his life burst into melody. His heart bade him go forth into the world and tell his joy. "Stay," said Wealth; "I will heap my gold about you." "Tarry," said Pride; "I will bring the world to you." "Linger," said Love, "and let us look into each other's eyes; let us drink life's red wine together; let us dance under the shade of the spice-tree, and fall asleep amid the roses."

But the soul of the poet was glad within him and he heeded not. From the dark castle of his ancestors, gloomy with overhanging vines, and damp with gray mosses and the mold of centuries, under the crumbling turrets and beneath the mighty arches that cast an impenetrable shadow, the poet passed out into the world, singing.

He came to an ocean over which white-winged ships hastened. Its foam-curved bil-



lows lapped the yellow sand in mellow music ; shells tinted like the dimpled palm of a baby were strewn amid the delicate seaweeds, and the blue sky bent above all as a bridegroom bends above his new-made bride. And as he walked and sang, an old man drew near. He was blind, and his life was heavy with the burden of passed but unforgotten grief. The song from the poet's soul fell upon the ears of the sad, blind one, and he eagerly questioned : "Can it be true there is aught in life but pain, aught but broken cordage, abandoned wrecks, and sands strewn with bleached bones?" And the God-like one passed on, singing.

Unto the hills he went, the hills green with waving grasses and spangled with the gold and azure and white of myriad dainty blossoms. Here he met a shepherd vainly seeking a lost lamb. The shepherd listened to the song ; his face lighted. He retraced his steps to his neglected flock and drove them to shelter from the oncoming storm. And the white soul passed on, singing.

He came to a great city where the crowd surged by him like the rushing of a swollen river. Above the tumultuous cries of the gain-seekers arose the voice of a woman. A face once beautiful looked out at him from masses

of dishevelled hair. Eyes once glowing, lips once proud, bore the traces of pain and humility. The woman stayed her steps and listened to the song. From her eyes hot tears fell. She raised her drooping head, and lifting her babe in her arms, she kissed it. The sad lips smiled. "Is it, then, true," she said, "that love is all? That he who loves best is the noblest? That he who loves and forgives, is forgiven, is pure?" And the glad poet passed on, singing.

He came to a group of men at their wine. One, hardly a man, was there ; his fair skin was flushed, his eyes were bleared, his hand shook as he raised his cup. He heard the song ; he put down his wine and listened. His companions burst into loud laughter and pressed the cup to his lips, but he heeded them not ; their voices were drowned by the song, and the young man followed the singer out under the star-lit heavens, onward into the silent pathways of the country, where all was cool and restful and pure. And the joyous one passed on, singing.

He came to a place where two armies strove together, and one fought for a high and holy cause against a host that threatened to overthrow it. The thinning ranks heard the song ; they rallied to their standard ; they pressed on

to victory. The dying heard the song and looked heavenward. And the joyous one passed on, singing.

He came to a churchyard, where, in the shadow of a yew-tree, the sexton filled up a grave. A woman cast herself upon it, and broke into loud grief; her tears wet the dry earth of the grave. Her friends lifted her to bear her away. She heard the song; she raised her eyes; she stood upright; she crossed her hands upon her breast, listening. "Is it true," she said, "what he sings of that far land, where souls shall meet and know their own?" And the pure one passed on, singing.

Thus he met many people and journeyed into many lands, and all who heard his song found in it the solace for their own particular grief, and each thought he sang for each—he who sang only because his love was great and his heart was glad. And as he journeyed he came to a great river that flowed in silence between two countries. The waves were dark and deep, and none had ever seen the opposite shore, wrapped in the mist of doubt and distance. The poet paused not to doubt. He looked back at the land he was quitting with a smile, and passed over the dark river, singing.

## ASPIRATION \*

I AM the blush of the summer rose,  
The flush of the morn,  
The smile on the face of the dead,  
The song newly born  
From heart of the poet, from shell of the sea,  
From rush of the river that oceanward flows.

I am immortal. Who knows me is glad.  
Men give me the name  
Of passions that kindle the soul—  
Love, faith, beauty, fame.  
I dwell with all these, yet am higher than all,  
Without me the angels of heaven were sad.

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## THE SHADOW WOMAN

ONE bright, sweet day stands clearly forth in memory. Under the motionless blue of heaven the world was radiant with the warm love-kiss of June. The golden orioles called as they flashed from tree to tree, and other song-birds of our northern clime made music through all the long, perfect day. Knee-deep the blooming grass stood, like transfixed mist, and woven through it gleamed the gold and white, the azure and pink of myriad weeds that lifted their dainty blossom-heads to greet the hurrying feet of June.

Hat in hand and hair all wind-tossed, I remember standing beside a slope pink with wild rose blooms, and musical with happy bees that mined amid the golden-hearted flowers and bore away their treasure. My child-heart was full of the melody of the season ; it felt in harmony with all things great and lovely, and the June-tide flooded through it as through the outer world. Suddenly I felt a presence near,

and turning, beheld a child who stood near me, in figure like myself, but clothed in black garments which contrasted strangely with the sun-enfolded scene. "Who are you?" I asked. The figure did not answer; her face was turned from me and she seemed not to hear.

I remember how the glory of the June day died away. The birds sang but faintly, while in my soul I felt a strange unrest. And as I gazed over the western hills I saw the sun fast sinking, and the evening star shone palely down upon me through the translucent air, as I wept for the day that was no more.

I remember my first kiss of love, at which my womanhood grew conscious of itself. From the soft-whispered words, the fond caress, I turned to see beside me the figure of a woman, like my own but clothed in black. Her face was turned from me and I saw it not. "Who are you?" I asked. She did not heed. But my lover's hand grew cold to my touch, and through my falling tears I saw I was alone.

I remember standing beside the coffin of a dear, loved friend, to lay upon the still form the last tribute of a pure affection. My tears fell fast—tears of sorrow, yet sweet and holy tears—springing from fond memories and the sense that death need not be loss. Hope looked longingly beyond the moment's desolation,

while faith's white finger showed my soul the radiant pathway heavenward. When, lo ! beside me I beheld the figure of a woman, like my own but robed in black. Her face was turned from me and I saw it not.

"Who are you," I asked, "that leaves me not in my joy or my sorrow?" She did not answer, and as she passed from sight I heard the clods of earth drop loudly down upon the lowered coffin.

Thus this figure has dwelt beside me, growing as I grew, haunting me forever, amid my joy and pain, amid my praise and prayer, a dark-robed figure that is like a shadow self.

Once only have I beheld her face. It was upon a wild, tempestuous night, when the dashing rain beat madly upon the window and the trees sighed and moaned outside, when the sky grew momentarily lurid from the angry flash of the lightning, and the hills and glens reverberated with the thunder's awful peal.

My heart, torn by a storm of equal fury to that which raged without, strove with besetting passions and the beckoning of a great temptation. Then, as I knelt in doubt and trouble, I felt that shadowy presence near. Springing to my feet, I asked : "Who are you that thus comes between me and my God ?"

She answered me not, standing with her face

turned from me. Then, summoning all my courage, I cried aloud : " Stay ! You shall not escape me ; I will look upon you. Too long I have feared to meet you ; now I shall have my will." And seizing the grim shape I held it fast. It turned its face to mine, and by the gleam of a lightning flash I beheld my own face look out at me from the shadow. My own face, yet not the same ; for from sunken eyes flashed a strange fire ; the ghastly cheeks were shrunken and the lips drawn in a sinister smile.

Only a moment did my eyes behold that face, but long enough to know it was like mine in every lineament, and yet so strange. Then, as the thunder crashed about me I heard wild, mocking laughter and the universe seemed full of only self.

Falling on my knees I prayed, and as I prayed I knew that again I was alone.

Often since has that shadow woman stood beside me, but only once in that moment of supreme temptation have I beheld her face.

Thus walks she with me evermore. Shall it be evermore ? Hell would mean her victory, and Heaven her defeat.



## WHENCE AND WHITHER ?

THERE's a spring behind the river,  
Far above us on the mountain  
Where the mornings come the soonest  
And the evenings longest glow ;  
There's a bow behind the arrow,  
Flying swiftly from the bow-string ;  
There's a bow behind the arrow,  
And a hand behind the bow ;  
There's a root beneath the flower  
In the darkness far below.

There's a sea before the river,  
Mighty sea that rolls in splendor ;  
There's a mark before the arrow  
Speeding, singing, on its way ;  
There is seed before the bloßsom  
Pregnant seed, that holds the meaning  
Of the fragrance of the flower  
And the colors warm and gay ;  
There is yesterday behind us,  
And to-morrow for to-day.

## FROM PARADISE

SHE stood upon the battlements of Heaven—a white-robed angel with a lily in her hand. She gazed out over the star-lit universe—down, down the deep arches of the night, until her soul-vision pierced our atmosphere, while through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

Thus she beheld the restless throng of men that hurried up and down in selfish haste ; she sensed the greed for gain, and the hot fire of uncontrolled passion struck out at her through the gloom.

She beheld poverty and disease rampant in the world ; she saw men's souls dwarfed and belittled by lust and hate and crime—while through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

“Alas ! that they should suffer so,” she said. “Would that I could go to them bearing this lily ; this lily, whose name is purity.” And across the deeps of night a soft wind came and fanned the angel's brow, while through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

Turning, she perceived behind her one whiter than herself.

"Daughter," he said, "I have heard thy words. If in thy soul thou truly desirest to go yonder to the world, red and reeking with the blood and sweat of war and toil, thou shalt depart. But remember this: thou shalt bear great sorrow; thou shalt be led through pain and woe, such as thou hast felt before but rememberest not. Thou shalt know again the burden of the breath; man shall tempt thee, but fear not; if thou bearest ever with thee thy lily thou needest not fear. Thou art fit to bear a message unto man, but thou must be brave and faithful; and though when thou art dwelling below thy earthly consciousness shall not remember this, thy truer life, during rare moments thou shalt have visions of the celestial city and be strangely conscious of thy angelhood. Be true to these glimpses and thou shalt bless the world, and gain, through added earthly experience, a greater strength and glory."

He ceased, and through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

Then one came close to the angel, bearing her a black mantle. She gathered it closely about her and started across the gateway, but paused, and, turning, gazed back upon the heavenly land.

“My home,” she said, “farewell! I shall visit thee in dreams. I shall come again more fit to dwell amid thy holy precincts. I go to bless and to be blessed. Farewell!”

It has been whispered in Heaven that a soul is to depart. Thus came a host of bright ones, gathering about her and speaking words of cheer and hope, and beautiful flowers were strewn about her feet—while through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

Then a chosen few passed with the angel through the open portal, and kept with her for a time down the star-strewn ways from Paradise to earth.

At last they left her alone amid the starlight, still bearing the spotless lily in her hand. Now she waited silently, her hands folded in prayer, her feet resting upon a cloud above a great city.

Suddenly she beheld a door open, and following a light she entered, while through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

Down the deeps of night a shooting-star fell, and one said, “A soul departs for Paradise,” and another said, “A pure one is born.”

In a humble home, where poverty and toil were household words, where daily labor barely met the daily need, where ignorance belittled and pain dwarfed, a child was born; and the mother, as she gazed upon her, lifted up her

face and said : “ She is pure and spotless ; let her name be ‘ Lily.’ ”

So came an angel out of Paradise—so a babe was born—while through the air of Heaven sweet music stole.

## FLOWERS

Not for man's uses do they shed their beauty,  
By every highway, field, and pasture bars ;  
But from an inner sense of life and duty  
That lifts the dumb cell upward toward the  
stars.

Not for man's pleasure are the flowers growing ;  
Though eyes were blind the roses still had  
blown.  
The spirit takes these forms, with beauty glow-  
ing,  
That we of higher being have outgrown.

Purpose of life have flowers ; glad goals invite  
them.  
Not aimlessly the purple violets blow.  
Ages from now the human shall unite them  
To hope and love and prayer that mortals  
know.

I was of them some time, in by-gone ages.

They are outreaching through all forms to  
God.

Scent of the roses, mind of wisest sages,

Alike have striven upward from the clod.

Who shall declare the soul or count its hours ?

Weigh it, or measure it, or tell its form ?

Vibrating through the beauty of the flowers,

Sweeping upon the dark wings of the storm.

All life is spirit pregnant with God's being.

The very clods are quickened by His breath  
To rise and seek Him ; blindness turns to see-  
ing,

Soul strives from form to form and knows no  
death.

## THE CITY

I REMEMBER the turreted walls of a great city, through one of whose mystic gateways I passed outward to forgetfulness—which men name life. In my soul I bear the consciousness of a far-off glory that was mine.

Sometimes, when sunset colors change the sky into splendor, far away amid the dazzling peaks of high-piled gold and crimson clouds, I think I see the gleaming walls, the sunny palaces of my native land ; but as I watch 'neath shading hand, the night's gray mantle shuts me from the vision of delight.

Sometimes, when night spreads over the silent earth the starry banners of its reign, I see through the deep spaces of the luminous air the outlines of a mighty city that seems to beckon to my soul, "Come hither." But even as I gaze the outlines disappear, and only the stars look down upon me with their calm and restful eyes.

Sometimes, when I look into the heart of a



flower, stealing over me comes a faint memory of a time, long, long ago, when it and I were together in some lovely land whose memory is as the memory of some childhood's hour—some event so dim we scarcely know if it be dream, fact, or fancy. Flooding my soul comes the sense of a life that has been mine. Some perfection of nature, some breath that sways the summer forests, brings me a sense of pre-existence, a consciousness of life and love and beauty and power that was as this, yet more, far more.

Sometimes, from the crowd of humanity that surges around me, where men meet and speak and pass to meet no more, gleams a face strangely familiar. I remember such eyes that gazed into mine long ago, in a strange, far-off land; and in my palm I feel a familiar touch, and know that thus in our native land, side by side and hand in hand, we walked amid the fadeless flowers of a paradise. Such have I named my friends, and together we journey.

Amid the music and the dance of life, when wine is red and eyes are bright; when love's kiss is warm upon the lips, and hand clasps hand in thrilling touch, over my soul comes a sense of sadness that seems the shadow of a lost delight. I am discontented because I have sometime tasted a purer joy.

Amid heart-break and pain, when the soul

must dwell alone, when the flesh is weary of its sickness, when death looks out at me from under his sombre brows, or bears away some cherished life, my soul leaps with a strange joy that seems the memory of a time when these were not.

Amid the daily toil and plod, the petty doings, the little strivings of a busy life, the memory of the Beautiful City rushes over me to strengthen my soul, to give patience to my heart, and make me glad with a strange, unaccountable gladness.

I am conscious of my exile. In my dreams I often stray within the precincts of my half-remembered home ; and morning's waking beams find me sad that I must still wander along the shadowy paths of earth.

Oh, Beautiful City ! I have sung of you in my songs, and some have understood and others have passed on in silence. Oh, Beautiful City ! When shall I tread again within the radiance of your gleaming walls ?

Through what ages must I wander from planet to planet before my soul grows pure to dwell eternally with you ?

Oh, Beautiful City, I do not forget ! To you ascend the daily aspirations of an exiled soul.

## OUT OF THE DEEP

Out of the deep strange voices call  
And visions beckon me afar ;  
Out of the deep whence shadows fall,  
Whence gleams the light of evening's star ;  
Whence roses bloom, and whirlwinds sweep,  
And sighs are born—out of the deep.

Out of the deep whence sunsets glow ;  
Whence springs the earth's unending life,  
Cometh the wish to feel and know  
A something more than earthly strife ;  
To soar instead of feebly creep  
Through shadows cast out of the deep.

Out of the deep, I know not how,  
I hear strange music rise and fall,  
I see clear eyes and heavenly brow  
Smile back at me, and voices call  
Above the pathway long and steep,  
To meet my kindred, out of the deep.

Out of the deep, whence all things spring,  
These thoughts have filled my human brain,  
Flitting to me like birds on wing,  
Nestling so close, to ease all pain ;—  
Saying, “ Sing on, for soon ye sleep,  
Through silence borne into the deep.”



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